



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Exporter:

I am writing to bring to your attention the benefits of an important international agreement. In June 2004 at Sea Island, Georgia, the Bush Administration joined its Group of Eight (G8) partners in launching an anticorruption-transparency action plan. This follows on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions* (Antibribery Convention), which went into effect in 1999. This Convention seeks to level the playing field for U.S. exporters by obligating all 35 participating governments to make it a crime for their firms to bribe foreign public officials in the conduct of international trade. The United States prohibited such bribery by U.S. firms and nationals under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977 (FCPA). You should be aware of both the Antibribery Convention and the restrictions that now govern many of your foreign competitors, and of the prohibitions of the FCPA. My annual reports to Congress on implementation of the Antibribery Convention, available online at www.export.gov/tcc, contain extensive information on the Convention and the FCPA.

Corporate awareness and compliance programs are among the most effective measures contributing to the deterrence of transnational bribery. This year's G8 action plan recognizes the importance of encouraging companies to establish corporate compliance programs to combat bribery. I encourage you to implement such initiatives and to partner with others in your industry to tailor them to your particular sector. I believe that through such actions, U.S. firms can contribute to the development of honest competition and the rule of law. The Commerce Department worked with the State and Justice Departments to produce a brochure titled *Fighting Global Corruption: Business Risk Management*. This brochure contains some general information on corporate compliance programs and is available online at www.state.gov/g/inl/rls/rpt/fgcrpt/.

An important mission of the Department of Commerce is to help American exporters overcome foreign trade barriers as well as to ensure that foreign countries comply with their commitments to the United States. With your assistance in the fight against corruption and bribery, we can be even more effective in carrying out this mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. L. Evans", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Donald L. Evans